ALASKA
PERM. FILE
Central Office
OCT 20 1954
JAN 10 1955

REPORT ON YAKUTAT, ALASKA
Visited July 17, 18, 1954 by Dr Armstrong

POPULATION

Yakutat Village - 240; 140 of voting age.
CAA station and weather - 18 families; Robert Jackson, Manager
Logging Camp - 32 loggers; Wallace Westfall, Manager
Loran Station - Navy - about 15.
Old Navy Yard - 1 couple.
Khantaak Island - 1 couple.

TRANSPORTATION

1. Pacific Northern Airlines - schedules vary with seasons - one plane north or south every day.
2. Alaska Steamship - about four times a year.
3. Berger Transportation - occasional.
   10 hours for fishing boats to Pelecin with fish.
4. Good harbour for Princeton-Hall.
5. Car - Jeep being used at present time.

FUEL

Standard Oil Station with adequate supply for stoves. Gas is bought at Airfield because of lower price.

MAIL

Present Box number - #67 - Combination: right to 1; left to 2½.

FOOD

Ordered in Case lot quantities:
1. Case Lot Grocery, Juneau - 8¢ per pound on transportation
2. Alaska Brokerage, Seattle, Washington

EDUCATION * Grade School - Territorial System/

HEALTH

Nurse on periodic basis shared with Hoonah - good dispensery set-up.

CHURCHES

1. Church of God Prophecy - Cleveland, Tenn. - Tomlinson, minister about two families, although others go for the music, etc.
2. Roman Catholics have had but two services since January. Last service smaller than first.
3. Mission Covenant (now Presbyterian)

HISTORY***

Founded Church - 1887 - Rev. A. Lydell - landed on beach - site of present manse.
Period of earthquakes - minister said to have lived three weeks in tent on hill having evacuated mission house. Later counseled people to move from Khantaak Island. Thought island might disappear. Tidalwaves at this time

***Mr. Rasmussen and others fit into the early picture here.

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HISTORY (cont'd)

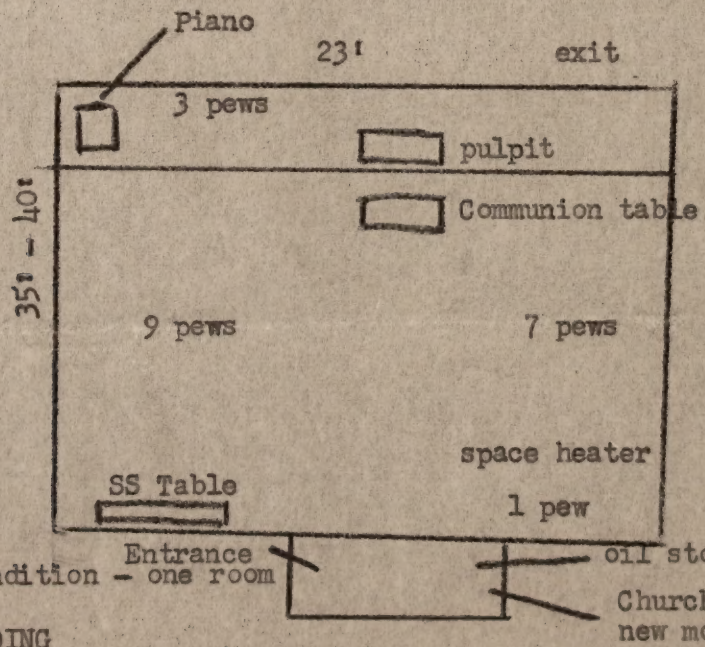
were prevalent.
1889 - A. Johnson - At Yakutat for 17 years.
M.E. Axelson - Missionary for 30 years now living in Seattle. Was at Yakutat for 18 years at one time without going out. Became U.S. Commissioner, Postmaster, Government Agent, etc. Retired in 1941.
1941 - 1946 - Stanley Benson
Maynard Lundborg - 1 year
Melvin Petersons - 1 year
1948 - 1954 - Helje Hamilton
June 13, 1954 - accepted principle of transfer to Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.

CHURCH PROGRAM

1. Worship Service - A.M. and P.M. During winter; midweek service
2. Sunday School - 50 enrolled - attendance about 35
   (a) Pre-school - James Thomas, teacher to grade 3
   David Henry or pastor - grade 4 and up
   (b) Material - Standard, Warner Press, Sunday, Pix (D.C. Cook), Covenant Children's papers.
   "Covenant graded material too advanced"
3. Choir - at times - seasonal only - no junior choir
4. No women's organization.
5. For a time had a monthly news letter with announcements to box holders copies sent to san and children at school - "Yakutat Letter"

Observation on Church School -
No direction toward "worship" - Of 18 songs sung only one a hymn - Little discipline though atmosphere.

BUILDING



In fair condition - one room

NEW CHURCH BUILDING

New location - $3,000. in fund. Present church "community owndd" - Covenant apparently does not have title.
Pastor proposed appointment of building committee and sketch of building - there was no action taken.

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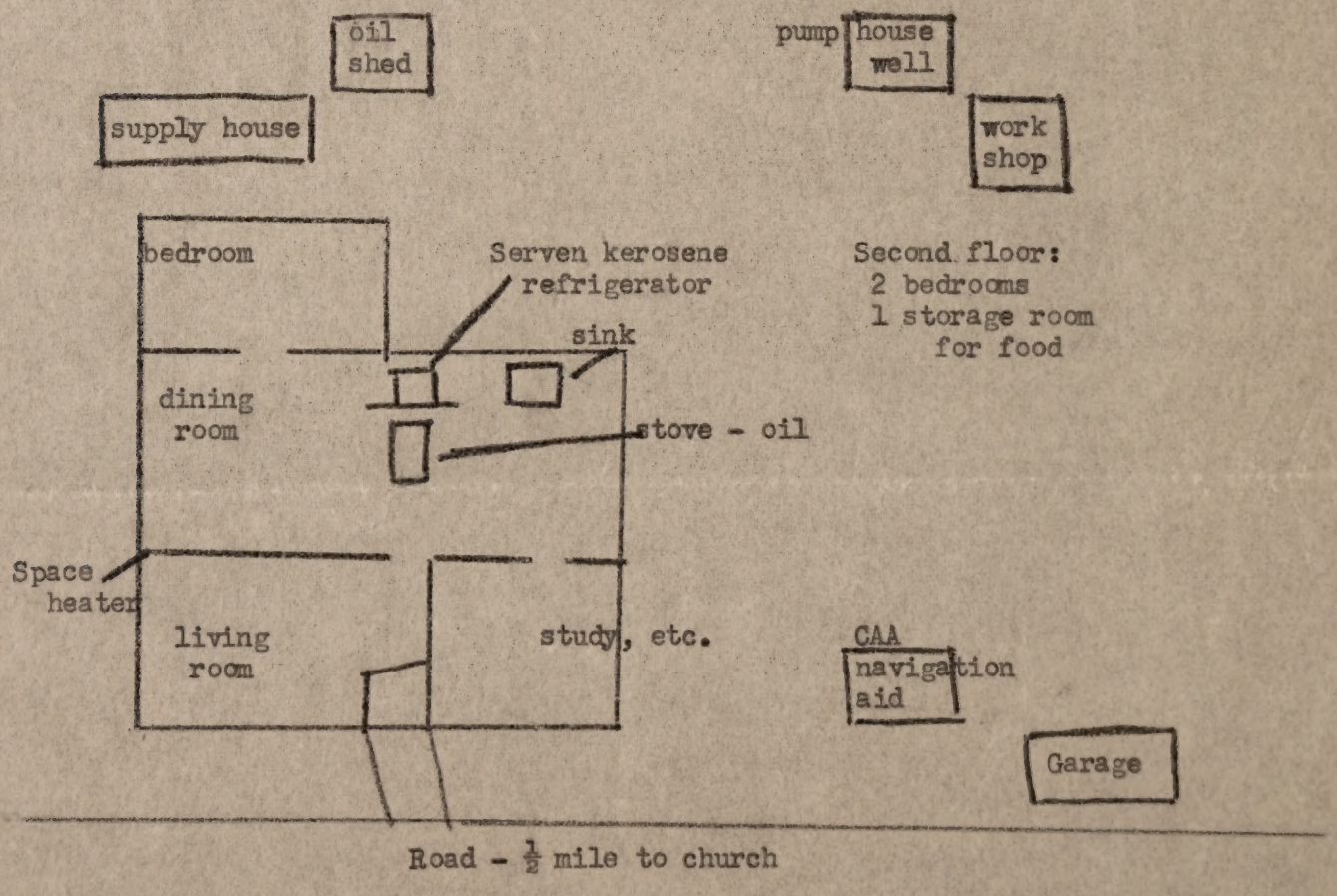
NEW CHURCH BUILDING (cont'd)

Proposed location next to school gym - land cleared and leveled. Present location in section under lease to town.
Under re-organization this point will have to be considered - "town" church or denominational property.
In the lease between the Covenant and the town for a large section a stipulation states no other denomination shall build without consent of the Covenant Church. This should be cleared as part of the eventual transfer. No legal action might be necessary!

MANSE

Known as "Mission House" ½ mile from present location of church - good location - beautiful waterfront - cleared of racks - some speculate it might have been cleared by Russion penal slaves. Yakutat was site for agriculture experiement by Russions. History records Russions blocked fishing streams and demanded tribute in furs for fishing rights. They also took children to Siberia to "educate" them. These children never returned. The Russians were eventually massacred.
Manse property in large cleared area - good for recreation area - gardening with soil enrichment - chickens - rabbits.
House is well furnished with everything only need is dishes.



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MANSE (cont'd)

Lights - electrical and gasoline
500 watt generator - AC - needs new engine (Briggs and Stratton)
Lights from neighbors
Plans for city power - new generator building and "cats" installed now.

Sewer - new cesspool - plot will be in file.

Water Line - freezes - water in winter by hose from well-house. Line should go below three feet at once.
50 gallon supply tank on second floor fed by gas pump - gravity feed.
30 gallon hot water tank
Large supply from aluminum roof for "soft" water.

Radio - Reception from Anchorage and Juneau. Recommends farm type fed by battery. One will be in equipment left at station.

CHURCH ORGANIZATION AT PRESENT

Chairman - Olaf Aleraham - since 1947
1st V. Chairman - Sheldon James
2nd V. Chairman -
Corresponding Secretary - notices - outside contacts
Recording Secretary - minutes of meetings
Treasurer - Mrs. Brenner
Deacons
Deaconess

Before 1947 everyone in village eligible to vote and hold office - In 1947 - reorganization (see list)
The church has been operated as a foreign mission station. The pastor received 15 months furlough: 5 mos. visitation, 5 mos. study, and 5 mos. rest.
Salary of pastor about $2,000. - pastor worked. Part of wages went to station maintenance. Could keep 10% for family. $400. appropriated for manse maintenance.

CHURCH FINANCES

a. Pay all S.S. supplies, oil, etc.
b. Nothing toward salary
c. Nothing toward mission house
d. Loan fund from church to people repayable at close of fishing season.
Recommendation by H. Hamilton - "Do not loan money to anyone." It is a habit to be broken.

FUEL CONSUMPTION FOR MANSE

About 40 barrels (50 gal.) a year at 21½¢ a gallon. Uses furnace oil for both because it is cheaper than stoveoil. $430.00

RRA:bc
9/54
Dept. of Work in Alaska

Yakutat Sdr

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noted

Box 67
Yakutat, Alaska
December 29, 1954

Dr. J. Earl Jackman
Board of National Missions
156 Fifth Avenue
New York 10, New York

Dear Mr. Jackman:

Greetings from the cold country of Alaska. Yes even though it doesn't get colder than ten below zero here we sure have a lot more of it than Pershing, Missouri, and snow too. We never thought to ask you whether we would have snow in Yakutat when we talked with you and were afraid we wouldn't have any. We like the snow. Well a couple feet of it was on the ground when we arrived and since then that has melted and we have a couple feet more again. We had to tramp through two feet of loose fresh snow for the half mile to church Sunday morning carrying Kathy and again Sunday evening for the evening service.

Sunday morning, Dec. 19, about 20 children were out to Church School and 28 adults were outfor the worship service. They had a little reception for us after the service. I had suggested that we have no evening service that Sunday evening since we were still trying to get settled. I later found out, though, that they had been planning to have that reception after the evening service and many who were planning on that found out too late of the change and missed it. December 26 16 children were out for Church School and 18 adults for morning worship, 14 in the evening.

Friday night the school presented the Christmas program and it was well done. This seems to be a big community affair and after the program presents galore were distributed by Santa Claus and his helpers. The people have no gift exchanges at home but bring all gifts to the hall. At eleven oclock a group were going out caroling but this was called off at the last moment when the chairman of the choir, David Abraham, got drunk and there weren't enough strong voices in the rest of the group to sing well.

This coming Friday night, New Year's eve, we plan to have services beginning at 10:30 greeting the New Year in prayer and a social time afterwards.

You asked us in your letter of December 7 to send a detailed account of what I find in the community and a description of the church and manse condition and equipment. I think we have this farely well down now.

A big number of people of the community are both shy and indifferent so our welcome from these is really quite cold. Some others are very very friendly. Moral standards are very low with much divorce, children being born outof wedlock, and men and women living in open sin. Drunkenness is also prevalent. The only other Indian community I have known which I can compare it with is Fort Thompson South Dakota and as yet I don't think things are any worse or even as bad as there. Money is much freer here. Too free in fact. People rather burn oil in their stoves at 21½ cents per gallon than go outdoors to cut down the forrest in their back yard for fuel. Yet the houses they live in and the cars they drive (try to drive) would make them appear to be poverty stricken.

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I called on the headquarters of the Coast Guard, and C. A. A. Stations today. The people connected with these and the lumber camp are each isolated little communities coming into the town for mail and occasionally a few food supplies. Transportation is made available for each to come into town for religious services but as yet only the Coast Guard boys have shown any interest. These do mix with the natives a little more than the others too. It will be difficult to try to integrate these into a unified church program.

The present core of faithful members of the church appears quite small at present, about five families is all. I understand , however, that there has been quite a bit of backsliding since Mr. Hamilton left. Thechurch program the people here expect me to take up and follow includes Sunday School, only childrenof about 13 years of age and below attend, morning worship service, Sunday evening worship, and midweek prayer and Bible study hour. There are no Sunday School teachers or even a superintendent from the congregation. The minister and his wife are expected to do all. Joan even has to play the piano for all services because they have only a fourteen year old boy who plays just a little.

From the equipment and supplies that are here and in the church one can tell that theprevious ministers have directed a pretty good and well rounded program. As I see my tasks ahead of me it will not be to try to outdo my predecessors in program but to take up and faithfully work and pray where they have left off, that is figuratively speaking at least. The equipment for games and children's handwork and Bible study indicate that a certain amount of work must have been done in these areas. It may be possible to work cooperation with the school teachers and use some of the school facilities for recreation, handcrafts, etc.

The church building itself is really not in too bad a condition as I see it. There is a building fund and some plans for a new building but really I don't see where it is so very needful. A moderate remodeling job with the addition of a new wing and a thorough redecorating should really be sufficient. A paint job is needed on the outside very soon if the new building doesn't come into being within the next couple years.

Inside the church looks dingy because the floor is rough and dirty and all wood triming and furnishings are stained very dark. An inventory of equipment consists of the following:

20 pews--seat 5 people on each
pulpit
piano--poor working order
Electric lights--no light fixtures, only bulb on end of cord.
(power furnished from canning company)
2 small children's tables with benches
library book shelves
about 100 volumes of good fiction and devotional books
Flannelgraph board and easel
Public address system with loudspeaker in bell tower also--in working order, also plays records of all three speeds
40 good religious records
Blackboard on large stand
Outdoor lighted bulletin board--practically new with full set of changable letters
Large Christian and American flag set
some dishes for church socials
Large Sallman painting lighted--"Christ the Good Shepherd"
2 curtains to divide sanctuary--not used

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Old Sunday School lesson picture rolls, large ones
Victor 16 M.M. sound film projector, Model 25. It looks rather old butprobably works alright.
30 Youth Sings chorus books
27 Songs for Children published by Augustana Book Concern, Rock Island, Illinois
35 The Covenant Hymnal, 1931 copyright
30 The Hymnal of the Evangelical Mission Covenant Church
12 The American Hymnal-- very old
10 old Bibles
Communion table

Turning now to the house that too is quite old and rather cheaply constructed. The inside walls are all finished with plywood and I believe it is all nailed over rough sheeting boards. Theoutside is finished with some cheap siding board. I have found no insulation between anywhere. There is no stone or concrete foundation but it is setting on poles into the ground. Some supports underneath also need replacing sometime because old ones are rotting. One side was partially dug out at one time for basement storage. That isno longer used for such but the hole is still open and winds can blow right underneath the house. I will scoop this full of snow as soon as I am sure that I have the water pipes fixed to drain themselves. There are no storm windows or screens for any of the windows. A few storm windows, some insulation in the walls, and closing up that open side under the house should make it much more comfortable and conserve on fuel bills which are extremely high. I have just found some screeno-glass in the attic and am putting that over some windows.

Electricity for lighting at the present time is supplied four to five hours each night by a neighbors small generating plant. The house is wired for lights in most of the rooms but if the big town plant comes through to operation, practically a complete rewiring job will be necessary to put lights in all rooms, wall receptacles in all rooms, there are none of these at present, and then group them in seperate circuits.

The water system is quite complicated and needs very much attention to keep things from freezing. I worked on this most all day yesterday so as to hook it up differently making it possible to drain the pipes under the house. They were all frozen. This I will plan to rework first of all next summer. Thewater line to the house , that is from the well to the house, needs to be taken up and relaid anyway since it is too shallow and freezes. A garden hose is used in the wintertime laying it above the ground and taking it up each time after filling the supply tank. I will plan to take the pump out of the pumphouse and hook the line to the house directly to the well at a point deep enough under the ground that there will be no danger of freezing. Then I will bring the pump into the house, hook one of the electric motors to it, and buy a small pressure tank and other equipment necessary to make it a wholly automatic system, that is as soon as the town plant comes through. This will eliminate the necessity of keeping a fire in the pump house and worrying about the attic supply tank and lines freezing on many different places.

Now for a listing of furnishings and supplies found in the manse. It is really very well furnished. In fact so well furnished that we would have left much of our own at home had we known that so much would be supplied for us.

Furniture
two good desks
Coal-wood cooking range converted to burn oil --for cooking and heatint study
oil burning heating stove --heating living room and bedroom kitchen, & bath
also water

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Furniture continued

Breakfast set-- table and 4 chairs of tubular steel construction
utility stand
built-in sink and cupboards
Servel kerosene refrigerator
small step ladder
high stool
Maple dining room set--table, 5 straight chairs, buffet cabinet
Maple living room set--daveno-bed, cushioned platform rocker and chair
another platform rocker--rather old
2 lamp tables
Piano and stool
2 card tables
sewing machine-- "Willard-A", treadle
4 white chairs
Maple bedroom set--double bed, night stand, dresser, chest-of -drawers
Maple bedroom set--double-decker beds, dresser
twin size bed
chest-of-drawers
dresser
toy chest and built in shelves for toys in room upstairs
baby crib and mattress
rocker
magazine table
2 upright Victrolas and 1 portable--hand cranked

Office supplies

3 movable book shelves and one built in book shelf
small two drawer metal filing cabinet
small safe
(also one of desks mentioned above)
Smith-Corona portable typewriter
a fair supply of office supplies such as pencils, pens, ink, a little paper, staplers, clips, etc.
wall pencil sharpener
Instructions and manuals for operation and care of all household equipment.

Bathroom

tub, toilet, built in cupboards

Kitchen equipment

a good supply of miscellaneous dishes of all kinds
Cooking and baking utensils, mixing bowls, kettles and pans
"Every day" silverware
"Good" silverware--service for 8 minus spoons
decorative dishes, flower holders, etc.
dish pans, face pans, dish drainer
brooms, mops, pails
pressure canner, jars, tin can sealer, a few cans

Laundry equipment

Gasoline washing machine--Wards, quite new
4 flat irons
gasoline iron
ironing board
2 glass wash boards
2 galvanized rinse tubs
tub stand and hand wringer

Linens

sheets, towels, wash cloths, pillow cases, table cloths--all sizes, doilies, dish towels, blankets, pillows, bedspreds, drapes, and curtains.

a fair supply of all of these.

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Baby furniture
toilet seat
bassinet
crib and mattress--mentioned before
2 extra mattresses
bathinett
high chair
stair gate

Supplies for church program
A good large quantity of flannelgraph materials a
very good church and community records, most helpful
A few books for pastor's study
about 50 good books of Christian fiction which have been used in a lending library at one time.
Collier's Encyclopedia, 1922 edition
Carrom board
tennis racket
a baseball mitt, glove, and catcher's mask
badminton net, shuttlecocks, and 6 rackets
7 ping pong paddles, balls, 2 nets
Jig saw puzzles
supply of gifts for cradle roll
Miscellaneous crepepaper
8 new 2 ring loose leaf notebooks
small erector set
quantity of booklets, cards, and rosarys for servicemen
soft ball and bat
other miscellaneous children's and young people's games

Miscellaneous
small wool rug
throw rugs
rain coats and boots of various sizes
framed pictures
9 lamps and lanterns, both kerosene and gasoline
pair snow shoes
pair skies
4 small gasoline motors
small 110 volt generator
pressure pump used with one of the motors to pump water
2 110 v. electric motors, one is new
1 D.C. current electric motor
a very good large supply of hand tools and shop supplies for all general repair work necessary
a large old oil burning stove used to heat pump house
about 30 to 35 oil drums, 55 galon size, for heater oil supply, gasoline, kerosene, etc.
30 calibre rifle
revolver
11 horsepower outboard motor--looks very good

Things found in attic storeroom
lamp table
vacuum sweeper
duffel bags
doll bed
plant stand
desk lamps
metal suit case

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Attic storeroom Continued
small supply staple foods
canning fruit jars
amateur photographer's developing materials
old National Geographic magazines
large American flag
Wall paper hanging kit
rat traps
school book satchels
christmas tree decorations
clothes chests
old kitchen cabinet
baby bottle sterilizer--automatic electric
curtain stretchers
canvass hammock
2 cot mattresses
2 boxes of uses shoes and boots
7 boxes used clothes
6 Army sleeping bags--new and slightly used
25 used blankets, quilts, and bed spreds
8 crocheted and woven rag rugs.

So ends the long list and probably some important things have been overlooked. We are wondering if it is our board's policy to supply all these things as linnens, dishes, etc., or if we are to supply these ourselves as these here wear out? I would like to know too of the board's policy concerning the supplying of heater fuel for the manse. It isn't stated in the terms of the contract or policies dealing with Alaskan missionaries. Please let us know about these things. I also want to mention that I think we will need some sort of transportation here for use both in personal needs and the work. I am going to look into the possibility of a Jeep that may be for sale here. It will surely need to be some sort of four wheel drive outfit.

In closing we want to thank you, Mr. Jackman, for the book you sent. It arrived today. And to all the staff of department of work in Alaska thank you for the Christmas card. We appreciate very much these tokens of your interest and concern following us on the field here. May the New Year for you be filled with the blessed peace of Christ and the knowledge that you are in His service.

Sincerely,

Claude E. Klaver

Claude E. Klaver

CC: Dr. R. Rolland Armstrong
Chairman of Natl. Mis. of this presbytery
c/o Mr. Armstrong